

OCA FILE DCI
RECEIVED Sen MURKOWSKI
SSCI Bf 12+18 Feb 87

March 2, 1987

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CONGRESSIONAL AFFAIRS

87-019

THE FOLLOWING IS SENATOR MURKOWSKI'S STATEMENT
ON THE WITHDRAWAL OF THE GATES NOMINATION

"I regret that Robert Gates found it necessary to withdraw his nomination as Director of Central Intelligence (DCI). This is unfortunate because Mr. Gates is a very decent person and fully qualified by virtue of his experience and capabilities to be DCI.

"Following Mr. Casey's resignation, there were many voices urging the President to nominate an experienced intelligence professional for this key position. Mr. Gates fit that bill. But any senior professional drawn from the ranks of the intelligence community would, almost by definition, have some association with the Iran-Contra affair. So it was with Robert Gates. Although his involvement was peripheral, he nevertheless was tarred with the Iran brush.

"Contrary to his critics, Mr. Gates did not turn a blind eye when he received hints of the diversion of funds to the Contras. He informed his boss, Mr. Casey; he notified Admiral Poindexter; and he initiated an

investigation by the CIA General Counsel. Meanwhile, he expressed concern to Mr. Casey about the wisdom of the Iran arms sales.

"But, in the last analysis, it wasn't to be. With Mr. Casey unable to respond for himself, Mr. Gates became a surrogate target. It was Mr. Casey who was really on trial during the Gates hearings. Unfortunately, few of my colleagues appreciate the role of a deputy director serving the Director. Many of the questions concerned why Mr. Gates didn't take certain actions, when it was Mr. Casey's responsibility as Director.

"Robert Gates is the victim of a situation beyond his control. Timing, the sequence of events--including the Tower Commission report--all worked against Mr. Gates' nomination.

"Now, the Administration must seek a replacement who carries none of the baggage of Iran. I hope Robert Gates will continue to serve his country as Deputy to the new Director."